



Department Updates

November 2019

Aging / ADRC

Jennifer Jako, Director

The Aging & Disability Resource Center's (ADRC) mission is to empower and support older adults, people with disabilities, and their families - to ask for help to achieve maximum independence and quality of life.

ADRC staff serve and support our community in a variety of ways - by linking them with information and resources and/or providing services. Our customers include a wide spectrum: older adults, adults with disabilities, their families, friends, caregivers, neighbors, and guardians. We assist physicians, discharge planners, social workers, care managers, businesses and employers. In addition to linking customers with resources, the ADRC has a wide range of services including: home delivered meals, specialized transportation, senior dining, adult day respite (Daybreak), benefits counseling, evidenced-based healthy aging classes, caregiver supports, and dementia care services.

One of our biggest barriers is outreach – making sure the public is aware of our services. We encourage employees to tell their friends, family and neighbors that we are here to help.

Outreach: To increase public awareness, the ADRC recently created a focused campaign through billboards, radio, website and Facebook outreach. The campaign ran in September and October. This was made possible because we were awarded one-time state grant funding. The campaign drove consumers to our website www.adrcconnections.org. Data indicates our website traffic increased greatly (for example people using their mobile phones to call our office from our web page link increased by 600%). We continue to evaluate how we reach people. We are working with people across many different generations which means people prefer or have access to our information in many different ways.

Medicare Part D Open Enrollment: The ADRC is a very busy place this time of year. Medicare D open enrollment is October 15 – December 7. You can't just sign up when you want, so it's important to know when you can enroll in the different parts of Medicare. ADRC staff offer assistance to people to evaluate and enroll in a drug plan online. This year, Medicare beneficiaries have 30 drug plans on average to choose from to find the best fit with their prescription needs in the coming year. The change in plans will take effect on January 1, 2020. Last year we helped approximately 1000 people with their Medicare Part D plans from Oct - Dec. We are helping more and more people every year. In fact, for the last few years we have hired limited term employees to assist customers during this busy time. This is also the time of year that customers contact me to praise the staff that assisted them with their enrollment; this support is critical for many older people in Barron County.

Transportation: We recently held two public hearings to get community input on our AddLIFE Transit program; these hearings allow the public to give input on how we utilize the funding and how we run the program. I am taking comments until 11/14/19 at jennifer.jako@co.barron.wi.us. Transportation remains a top unmet need in our county and across the state of Wisconsin and is among the most requested support service for older adults and persons with disabilities. Having transportation programs allows individuals to remain in a community setting and out of expensive institutional care. Thriving communities have strong transportation options. One example of input received this year *"This letter is to support AddLIFE Transit...it is the best program in Barron County...it serves so many residents. We have been using it for 7 years already...it has enabled us to be easily transported for appointments at a very reasonable cost. We have been able to stay at home despite my being in a wheelchair since 2012 since my first stroke...we feel that this program should continue as long as possible to assist the Barron County residents."* - A. Olson Chetek

Our transportation advocacy efforts made a difference - the state biennial budget increased our specialized transportation funding allocation starting in 2020. The increased funding allows us to increase service, which is critical since we all know our aging and disability population is growing in Barron County. In 2018, we served 277 different customers and provided over 10,000 rides. We will also be receiving a new wheelchair accessible van in early 2020; this will replace an existing van that has maximized its acceptable mileage.

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Governor's Caregiver Taskforce: Governor Evers created a taskforce this year as an effort to address the workforce shortage of caregivers, an issue that was also discussed greatly as part of the state budget. The Task Force is charged with analyzing strategies to attract and retain a strong care workforce, supporting families providing care for their loved ones (informal caregivers) through respite services and other supports, assessing compensation and fringe benefits for caregivers including ways to make healthcare affordable, establishing a registry of home care providers and developing a plan to provide referral or matching services for those in need of home care, developing a plan to implement recruitment and retention programs to expand providers, and to explore and develop solutions in collaboration with other agencies to support and strengthen the direct care workforce, increase access and improve the quality of caregiving in Wisconsin. The ADRC supports this work and will be watching closely and giving input. Caregiver shortage is another top unmet need in our local communities.

Healthy Aging Classes: Peg Schmidt continues to coordinate evidenced-based Healthy Aging workshops in our three county ADRC region. In 2019, we successfully ran 18 workshops. The workshops we offer aim at decreasing risks of falling, improving diabetes or other chronic condition self-management, and taking care of yourself as a caregiver. We collaborate with a large number of community partners and volunteers to provide these very important prevention programs in our communities. If you or a loved one have interest in any of our workshops, call Peg at Ex 6374.

Memory Screening Available: A memory screen provides useful health information about your brain, just like a blood pressure test provides information about your heart. Anyone can get a free, confidential 10-15 minute memory screen, provided by trained and certified ADRC staff. November is Memory Screen Month – the ADRC partnered with all local healthcare systems to offer memory screening events at their locations on November 13th. We continue to encourage everyone to think about being screened. Contact the ADRC anytime to schedule an appointment.

Daybreak: Our adult day respite service is available for people with memory loss. We have a daytime program specifically designed for those with memory loss, giving caregivers a much needed break. Daybreak is a safe and supportive environment for those with memory change. The program is person-centered and designed to help and encourage participants to maintain purpose and dignity. Community connections are important to the program, and music is an integral part of every day. Participants enjoy music from local musicians, playing piano, harp and accordion, choirs and children's programs. Community guest experts come to share information on a wide variety of topics including: wood carving, making maple syrup, making ice cream, and Tai Chi, just to name a few. Daybreak maintains certification by the Wisconsin Bureau of Quality Assurance. Anyone interested in learning more about the program can contact Peg Schmidt at Ex 6374.

Consider becoming a Meals on Wheels Volunteer! As we plan our 2020 Meals on Wheels delivery schedule, the ADRC is seeking employees and board members to volunteer as Meals on Wheels drivers to deliver meals over their lunchtime in 2020. Volunteer drivers pick up meals at the Barron Senior Citizens Center around 11:30am and deliver meals in the city of Barron area. It takes roughly 30 minutes. Volunteer employees from the Government Center rotate throughout the year - you are only needed 3-4 times per year. Delivering meals is a rewarding experience that provides a daily wellness check and social interaction opportunity for homebound older adults in Barron County. Volunteers are vital to the success of our program. If you have an interest or more questions, please email or call Joanne Sweet at extension 6206 or joanne.sweet@co.barron.wi.us. Thank you for your consideration.

Centenarian Celebration: We hosted our 21st annual Centenarian Celebration on October 11, 2019 at the Rice Lake Senior Center. Ten centenarians (photo below) along with their family and friends, Senator Janet Bewley, Representative Romaine Quinn, Chair Louie Okey, and Administrator Jeff French came and enjoyed lunch together to honor our special guests. This celebration is always one of our favorite days of the year. As Louie mentioned, we had 1,000 years of knowledge in the room; it was an honor to spend a few hours with each of them. What helps you reach that magical 100 years? There is no one pathway to reaching age 100, but research shown that the following tricks can help you get there - which were referenced again and again by our centenarians: a positive attitude, healthy diet, routine exercise, strong faith, clean living, supportive family, and genetics. Unofficial research with our Barron County centenarians revealed "work hard," "have a big family" and "lots of dairy!" to name a few.



None of this is possible without the outstanding staff that work in the ADRC. Our ADRC professionals are very engaged – each team member functions extremely well as a team and individually. In addition to the hard work staff produces each day, many also organize presentations of best practices for state conferences, mentor others in the state, and serve on state professional boards. All of these things balance to make a positive office culture and contributes to a greater Aging and Disability Network in the State of Wisconsin. In 2020, we will continue our work and mission to help older adults, persons with disabilities, and their families to meet their goals. If you or anyone you know needs any information about our services or events, please call at 715-537-6225, email staff, walk into our office anytime, check out our website at www.adrcconnections.org, or like us on Facebook @ADRCBarron. We are here to help.

Forestry

John Cisek
County Forester

The extremely wet weather has prohibited harvest activities on the County Forest this summer. The July tornado affected only 10 acres of County forest at the Arland Rifle Range. The pine west of the entrance road will be clear-cut and eventually re-planted. Other storm damage on non-County Forest properties included the ATV Special-Use area on Hwy.8 East of Almena and Rockmans Woods property in Barron south of Barron High School. All of the storm damaged properties are under contract for salvage.

On August 8th the Barron County Forest, along with Douglas, Bayfield and Ashland counties, were part of a full recertification audit by the two certifying bodies (FSC & SFI) covering the county forest. The results were very complimentary, receiving no Corrective Actions or Observations for Improvement.

The 2019 Fall Timber Sale advertisement will solicit bids on four tracts of timber in Cedar Lk. , Bear Lk. , Maple Plain and Vance Cr. Townships. Total volume advertised will be 742 MBF (thousand board feet) of hardwood saw timber, 5.1 MBF of pine saw timber , 1422 cords of aspen, 846 cords of mixed hardwood, and 881 cords of oak. Bid opening date has yet to be set.

Thank-you to Janette Cain, our DNR Liaison Forester, for her hard work in setting up these sales.

Clerk of Circuit Courts

Sharon Millermon
Clerk of Courts

The clerk of court office will be a passport application acceptance facility agency again for another year beginning 01/01/2020. Annually all clerk of court staff must be recertified. Recertification begins by the passport agency sending each clerk a link with training material that must be reviewed prior to taking a test. The approximate time involved to review the material is 4 hours plus additional time to take the test. The agent must pass a difficult test with 90% accuracy. The clerk of court office is not statutorily required to accept passports and many clerk of court offices throughout the State have given it up as it simply takes too much time away from the statutory requirements of clerks. As of the end of October, clerk of court staff have accepted 455 applications. We have agreed to provide this service for at least one more year.

Another project we are undertaking is viewing old boxes of microfiche to determine which files will be required to be converted to an electronic format for retention and compliance with Supreme Court Rule 72. This is a slow process in which clerks must view each microfiche to determine the records retention period. This project came about as microfiche readers and printers are almost obsolete and the clerk of court office must meet the requirements of SCR 72 in retaining and being able to produce documents.

Efforts are presently underway in turning over all old unpaid debts, including restitution, up to 18 years old to the Statewide Debt Collection. Clerks have worked really hard in attempting to locate addresses, sending out notices, scanning notices returned undeliverable, which is overwhelming in itself, and turning the actual debts over to SDC. Once this mass project is completed, new debts will continue to be turned over to SDC routinely.

From us at the clerk of circuit court office, Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Health & Human Services

Stacey Folik, Director

Barron County Department of Health and Human Services was awarded a \$646,951 Family Treatment Court Grant. The grant will run from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2022 and is funded by the United States Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The project seeks to build the capacity of local courts and units of local government, to establish new family drug courts. Family drug courts serve parents who require treatment for a substance abuse disorder and who are involved with the child welfare system as a result of child abuse, neglect, or other parenting issues. Family drug courts provide intensive judicial monitoring and interventions using a multi-disciplinary approach to treat parents' substance use and/or co-occurring mental health disorders. Barron County was one of eleven counties nationwide to receive the grant in 2019, and the only recipient from Wisconsin.

The "Barron County Family Treatment Court" (FTC) will provide treatment and supportive services to participants with the goal of improving safety, well-being, and permanence for children. The county intends to use an integrated FTC model with the same court and judge hearing both dependency and recovery matters. At its maximum, the FTC will serve 12 families. Anticipated outcomes include improved treatment completion rates, reduction in the number of reentries into the child welfare system, and more efficient case processing.

Our Mental Health Crisis and Addiction Services programs were reviewed by the State of Wisconsin program certification staff in October. Both programs were recertified for a period of two years. The Comprehensive Community Services program is being reviewed mid-November with the intent of receiving a 2 years recertification status as well.

We are in the process of hiring three new employees for the Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) program, 2 for children's programming and 1 for adult programming. CCS serves Barron County residents across the lifespan who have mental health or addiction service needs. Allowable services are fully funded by State and Federal funds.

The Public Health Unit has been doing school based Influenza immunization clinics over the last month. These immunizations are free of charge to children. National Influenza Week 2019 is December 1-7, 2019. Visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at the following link for more information regarding Influenza prevention, symptoms and diagnosis and ways to treat influenza. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

Finance

Jodi Busch, Finance Director

The Finance Department had a very busy fall season focusing on the 2020 budget. At the November 4th County Board meeting, a County Levy was set at \$21,955,284; an increase from 2019 of \$639,890 or 3%. Once the budget was approved, it was full speed ahead as the County Apportionment calculations were finalized and sent out to the municipalities and Department of Revenue. Soon after, the Levy Limit Worksheet was completed and also sent to the DOR. Next came the setup of the 2020 Departmental Budgets in our financial software system. Did you know that the County Budget is divided up between almost 1400 separate departmental accounts? As you can imagine, it takes a great deal of time throughout the budget process to enter, calculate, and check, to insure that everything ties out to what was approved. Now with just a few more tasks to complete, we will be ready for 2020.

In addition to preparing and looking ahead to the New Year, we are also looking back over 2019 to begin our year-end processes. CliftonLarsonAllen will be onsite the week of December 9th for their annual preliminary audit visit. By spending a few days here in December, they can take care of some of the more tedious tasks, which will help streamline the audit process when they come again in the spring.

We are also working with CLA to update our Internal Controls. Because we have limited staff in several departments, we have a Segregation of Duties finding in our annual Financial Statements. Two years ago, we started looking through various accounting functions to assess where the deficiencies are. In 2019 we completed the assessment and implementation of an Accounts Payable process that meets their Segregation of Duties requirements. In 2020 we will be tackling the Payroll function, which will include departmental assessments as well as the payroll processing in the Finance Department.

As we move into 2020, we will start reconciling 2019 accounts and prepare the necessary work papers. W-2's, 1095's, and 1099's will be calculated and sent out in January, and we will be assisting departments with their year-end deposits, payments, and any necessary adjusting entries through February. Late February and March will consist of closing the books County-wide, and in April we will be putting everything together for when the Auditors visit at the end of the month. The whole process of closing the year and preparing for the audit takes several months to complete. The Finance Team will be working together through the winter to insure deadlines are met and all reconciliations are completed accurately.

On behalf of the Barron County Finance Department, we wish you a blessed Christmas Season and Happy New Year!